

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for modifying a hexahedral volume mesh, comprising:
 - 2 generating a sheet of hexahedral elements from a hexahedral volume mesh, wherein said mesh includes a plurality of three-dimensional (3D) hexahedrons each having six quadrilateral faces
 - 4 and eight nodes, each node formed at three intersecting edges, and wherein said sheet includes a subset of the plurality of 3D hexahedrons;
 - 6 determining a group of hexahedrons within said sheet to refine;
shrinking said group; and
 - 8 inserting a new sheet of hexahedrons into the hexahedral volume mesh.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the six quadrilateral faces for each 3D hexahedron include
 - 2 three sets of opposing faces, wherein generating a sheet includes:
selecting a first hexahedron, the selected hexahedron having a first set of opposing faces, the
 - 4 first set including a first opposing face and a second opposing face;
determining a first neighboring hexahedron, the first neighboring hexahedron sharing the first
 - 6 opposing face with the selected hexahedron;
selecting the first neighboring hexahedron, the first neighboring hexahedron having another face
 - 8 opposite the shared first opposing face;
repeating steps b) and c) until a predetermined sheet edge threshold being satisfied;
 - 10 determining a second neighboring hexahedron, the second neighboring hexahedron sharing the second opposing face with the selected hexahedron;
 - 12 selecting the second neighboring hexahedron, the second neighboring hexahedron having another face opposite the shared second opposing face;
 - 14 repeating steps e) and f) until the sheet edge threshold being satisfied;
grouping all selected hexahedrons into a first column of hexahedrons;
 - 16 selecting the first hexahedron, the selected hexahedron having a second set of opposing faces, the second set including a third opposing face and a fourth opposing face;

- 18 determining a third neighboring hexahedron, the third neighboring hexahedron sharing the third
opposing face with the selected hexahedron;
- 20 selecting the third neighboring hexahedron;
repeating steps a) through h) until a second column of hexahedrons is grouped;
- 22 selecting the first hexahedron;
determining a fourth neighboring hexahedron, the fourth neighboring hexahedron sharing the
24 fourth opposing face with the selected hexahedron;
selecting the fourth neighboring hexahedron;
- 26 repeating steps a) through h) until a third column of hexahedrons is grouped;
repeating steps a) through p) until the sheet edge threshold being satisfied; and
- 28 grouping all columns of hexahedrons into the sheet.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein generating a sheet includes:

- 2 selecting a hexahedron, the selected hexahedron having three sets of opposing faces from the
six quadrilateral faces, each set including a first opposing face and a second opposing face;
- 4 determining a neighboring hexahedron to refine, the neighboring hexahedron sharing one face
with the selected hexahedron;
- 6 repeating step b) until all neighboring hexahedrons have been found;
selecting the neighboring hexahedron to refine;
- 8 repeating steps a) through d) until all hexahedrons in the sheet have been found.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein determining a group of hexahedrons includes identifying said
group using one of a point, line, and surface of the mesh.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein determining a group of hexahedrons within said sheet to
2 refine includes:

- 4 selecting a hexahedron in the group to refine, the selected hexahedron having three sets of
opposing faces from the six quadrilateral faces, each set comprising a first opposing face and a
second opposing face;
- 6 identifying the one set of opposing faces that are not shared by another hexahedron in the
sheet, the set including a first unshared opposing face and a second unshared opposing face;
- 8 determining a distance between the first unshared opposing face and the second unshared
opposing face;
- 10 repeating steps a) through c) for each hexahedron in the group to refine;
comparing the distance for each hexahedron in the group to refine;
- 12 determining the hexahedron with a shortest distance;
calculating a ratio of the distance for each hexahedron in the sheet to refine to the shortest
14 distance;
comparing the ratio to a refinement threshold;
- 16 grouping each hexahedron identified to refine into the group; and
repeating steps g) through i) for each hexahedron in the group to refine.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein shrinking said group includes:

moving exterior nodes of the group from an original position into the volume of each
hexahedron; and

maintaining a copy of each exterior node in the original position.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein shrinking said group includes pillowing.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein inserting a new sheet of hexahedrons into the hexahedral
volume mesh includes:

separating each hexahedron in the group from the hexahedral volume mesh;

forming a void in the hexahedral volume mesh; and

inserting the new sheet of hexahedrons into the void.

9. A method for generating a hexahedral volume mesh by inserting a sheet of hexahedrons,
2 comprising:

generating an initial hexahedral volume mesh, wherein the mesh includes a plurality of three-
4 dimensional (3D) hexahedrons, each 3D hexahedron having six quadrilateral faces and nodes,
each node formed at three intersecting edges;

6 determining an area to refine in the initial mesh;

generating a sheet from said area, wherein the sheet includes a subset of the plurality of 3D
8 hexahedrons;

defining a group of hexahedrons within said sheet to refine;

10 shrinking said group; and

inserting a new sheet of hexahedrons into the hexahedral volume mesh.

10) The method of Claim 9, wherein generating a sheet includes using a dual of the initial
hexahedral mesh.

11. The method of Claim 9, wherein determining an area to refine includes identifying said area
using one of a point, line, and surface of the mesh.

12. The method of Claim 9, wherein the initial hexahedral mesh is selected from the group
consisting of an all-hexahedral swept mesh, multiple all-hexahedral swept meshes for a
subdivided geometric entity, a quadrilateral mesh from a source surface to a target surface, and
combinations thereof.

13. The method of Claim 9, wherein the six quadrilateral faces for each 3D hexahedron include
2 three sets of opposing faces, and wherein generating a sheet includes:

selecting a first hexahedron, the selected hexahedron having a first set of opposing faces, the
4 first set comprising a first opposing face and a second opposing face;

determining a first neighboring hexahedron, the first neighboring hexahedron sharing the first
6 opposing face with the selected hexahedron;

selecting the first neighboring hexahedron, the first neighboring hexahedron having another face
8 opposite the shared first opposing face;

- repeating steps b) and c) until a sheet edge threshold being satisfied;
- 10 determining a second neighboring hexahedron, the second neighboring hexahedron sharing the second opposing face with the selected hexahedron;
- 12 selecting the second neighboring hexahedron, the second neighboring hexahedron having another face opposite the shared second opposing face;
- 14 repeating steps e) and f) until a sheet edge threshold being satisfied;
- grouping all selected hexahedrons into a first column of hexahedrons;
- 16 selecting the first hexahedron, the selected hexahedron having a second set of opposing faces, the second set comprising a third opposing face and a fourth opposing face;
- 18 determining a third neighboring hexahedron, the third neighboring hexahedron sharing the third opposing face with the selected hexahedron;
- 20 selecting the third neighboring hexahedron;
- repeating steps a) through h) until a second column of hexahedrons is grouped;
- 22 selecting the first hexahedron;
- determining a fourth neighboring hexahedron, the fourth neighboring hexahedron sharing the
- 24 fourth opposing face with the selected hexahedron;
- selecting the fourth neighboring hexahedron to refine;
- 26 repeating steps a) through h) until a third column of hexahedrons is grouped;
- repeating steps a) through p) until the sheet edge criterion is met; and
- 28 grouping all columns of hexahedrons into the sheet.

14. The method of Claim 9, wherein generating a sheet includes:

2 selecting a hexahedron, the selected hexahedron having three sets of opposing faces from the six quadrilateral faces, each set including a first opposing face and a second opposing face;

4 determining a neighboring hexahedron, the neighboring hexahedron sharing one face with the selected hexahedron;

6 repeating step b) until all neighboring hexahedrons have been found;

selecting the neighboring hexahedron;

8 repeating steps a) through d) until all hexahedrons in the sheet have been found.

15. The method of Claim 9, wherein determining a group of hexahedrons within said sheet to refine includes:

10 selecting a hexahedron in the group to refine, the selected hexahedron having three sets of opposing faces from the six quadrilateral faces, each set comprising a first opposing face and a second opposing face;

14 identifying the one set of opposing faces that are not shared by another hexahedron in the sheet, the set comprising a first unshared opposing face and a second unshared opposing face;

16 determining a distance between the first unshared opposing face and the second unshared opposing face;

18 repeating steps a) through c) for each hexahedron in the group to refine;

comparing the distance for each hexahedron in the group to refine;

20 determining a hexahedron with a shortest distance;

22 calculating a ratio of the distance for each hexahedron in the group to refine to the shortest distance;

comparing the ratio to a refinement threshold;

24 grouping each hexahedron identified to refine into the group; and

repeating steps g) through i) for each hexahedral in the group to refine.

16. The method of Claim 9, wherein shrinking said group includes:

moving exterior nodes of the group from an original position into the volume of each hexahedron; and

maintaining a copy of each exterior node in the original position.

17. The method of Claim 9, wherein shrinking said group includes pillowing.

18. The method of Claim 9, wherein inserting a new sheet of hexahedrons into the hexahedral volume mesh includes:

separating each hexahedron in the group from the hexahedral volume mesh;

forming a void in the hexahedral volume mesh; and

inserting the new sheet of hexahedrons into the void.

19. A sheet insertor for modifying a hexahedral mesh, comprising:

2 a controller for performing the steps of:

generating a sheet of hexahedrons from a hexahedral mesh, wherein the mesh includes a

4 plurality of 3D hexahedrons, and wherein said sheet including a subset of the plurality of 3D hexahedrons;

6 determining a group of hexahedrons within said sheet to refine;

separating each hexahedron in the group from the hexahedral volume mesh to form a void; and

8 inserting a new sheet of hexahedrons into the void.

20. The sheet insertor of Claim 19, wherein controller further performing the steps of:

2 selecting a hexahedron, including three sets of opposing faces, wherein each set includes a first opposing face and a second opposing face;

4 selecting a neighboring hexahedron, including three sets of opposing faces, the neighboring hexahedron sharing one face with the selected hexahedron; and

- 6 selecting a plurality of other neighboring hexahedrons, each neighboring hexahedron
comprising three sets of opposing faces, each neighboring hexahedron sharing a face with
8 another hexahedron.

21. The sheet insertor of Claim 19, wherein determining a group of hexahedrons within said sheet to refine includes:

determining a plurality of hexahedrons in the group to refine;

determining a hexahedron with the shortest distance;

determining a ratio of the distance for each hexahedron in the group to the shortest distance and comparing the ratio with a refinement threshold.

22. The sheet insertor of Claim 19, wherein determining a group of hexahedrons includes identifying said group using one a point, line, and surface of the mesh.

23. A method for modifying a hexahedral volume mesh, comprising:

inserting a volume into a hexahedral volume mesh forming an intersection, wherein the mesh includes a plurality of 3D hexahedrons, each 3D hexahedron having eight nodes, each node formed at three intersecting edges;

moving nodes in the hexahedral mesh to surface of intersection with the volume;

inserting a layer of elements on each side of the volume; and

removing the volume.

24. A method for generating a hexahedral volume mesh by mesh cutting, comprising:

generating an initial hexahedral mesh including a plurality of 3D hexahedrons, each hexahedron having a plurality of nodes;

inserting a volume into the initial hexahedral mesh forming an intersection;

moving nodes in the hexahedral mesh to surface of intersection with the volume;

inserting a layer of elements on each side of the volume; and

removing the volume.

25. A mesh cutter for cutting a hexahedral volume mesh, comprising:

a controller for performing the steps of:

generating an initial hexahedral mesh including a plurality of 3D hexahedrons, each hexahedron having a plurality of nodes;

inserting a volume into the initial hexahedral mesh forming an intersecting having a surface; and

inserting a layer of elements on each side of the volume.

26. A method for modifying a volume mesh, comprising:

2 connecting a plurality of rows of elements of a volume mesh using connecting lines, where said
connecting lines, together with associated planes, form a plurality of three-dimensional regions,
4 said plurality of three-dimensional regions forming a sheet of volume mesh elements from said
mesh;

6 determining a plurality of hexahedral elements within said sheet to refine using a predetermined
threshold for each one of said plurality;

8 forming a void between said plurality of hexahedral elements and said mesh;

inserting a new sheet of hexahedral elements into said void to produce a modified form of said
10 volume mesh.

27. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions, the
2 plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:

connect a plurality of rows of elements of a volume mesh using connecting lines, where said
4 connecting lines, together with associated planes, form a plurality of three-dimensional regions,
said plurality of three-dimensional regions forming a sheet of volume mesh elements from said
6 mesh;

determine a plurality of hexahedral elements within said sheet to refine using a predetermined
8 threshold for each one of said plurality;

form a void between said plurality of hexahedral elements and said mesh;

10 insert a new sheet of hexahedral elements into said void to produce a modified form of said
volume mesh.

28. A method for modifying a volume mesh, comprising:

- 2 connecting a plurality of rows of elements of a volume mesh using connecting lines, where said
connecting lines, together with associated planes, form a plurality of three-dimensional regions,
- 4 said plurality of three-dimensional regions forming a sheet of volume mesh elements, each
mesh element including a plurality of surfaces;
- 6 determining at least one node linking a plurality of surfaces in said sheet using a predetermined
algorithm;
- 8 disconnecting a plurality of said connecting lines, together with a plurality of said associated
planes, at said at least one node and removing a portion of said plurality of connecting lines,
- 10 together with a portion of said plurality of associated planes, in a predetermined direction away
from said point to form a void in said mesh;
- 12 inserting a new sheet of hexahedral elements into said void to produce a modified form of said
volume mesh.

29. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions, the
2 plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:

- connect a plurality of rows of elements of a volume mesh using connecting lines, where said
- 4 connecting lines, together with associated planes, form a plurality of three-dimensional regions,
said plurality of three-dimensional regions forming a sheet of volume mesh elements, each
- 6 mesh element including a plurality of surfaces;
- determine at least one node linking a plurality of surfaces in said sheet using a predetermined
- 8 algorithm;
- disconnect a portion of said connecting lines, together with a portion of said associated planes,
- 10 at said at least one node and removing said portion in a predetermined direction away from said
point to form a void in said mesh;

12 insert a new sheet of hexahedral elements into said void to produce a modified form of said
volume mesh.

30. A method for modifying a volume mesh, comprising:

- 2 connecting a plurality of rows of elements of a volume mesh using connecting lines, where said
connecting lines, together with associated planes, form a plurality of three-dimensional regions,
4 said plurality of three-dimensional regions forming a sheet of volume mesh elements from said
mesh;
6 inserting a volume including elements within said volume into said mesh at the sheet forming an
intersection having a surface between said volume and the mesh;
8 associating nodes at said surface including adding a plurality of layers to existing mesh
elements at the surface;
10 removing said volume including the elements within said volume to produce a modified form of
said volume mesh.

31. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions, the
2 plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:

- connect a plurality of rows of elements of a volume mesh using connecting lines, where said
4 connecting lines, together with associated planes, form a plurality of three-dimensional regions,
said plurality of three-dimensional regions forming a sheet of volume mesh elements from said
6 mesh;
insert a volume including elements within said volume into said mesh at the sheet forming an
8 intersection having a surface between said volume and the mesh;
associate nodes at said surface including adding a plurality of layers to existing mesh elements
10 at the surface;
remove said volume including the elements within said volume to produce a modified form of
12 said volume mesh.